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# THE BAPTIST *Record*

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT — Janice Sanchez, originally of Puerto Rico, talks with friends and family after the May 25 missionary appointment service at Spotswood Church, Fredericksburg, Va. Sanchez will serve in western Europe. (BP photo by Warren Johnson)



## WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

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## Live SBC 'webcasts' planned

ALPHARETTA, Ga. (BP) — A live Internet "webcast" is planned for the complete June 15-16 Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) annual meeting and the pre-convention Pastors' Conference, marking the first time full convention proceedings have been available across the globe. The webcast will be available through the SBC Executive Committee's [www.sbc.net](http://www.sbc.net) site and the North American Mission Board's (NAMB) site, [www.namb.net](http://www.namb.net). It is made possible in cooperation with NAMB's broadcast communications group, which provides audio and video support for the convention each year.

Live coverage of the Tuesday sessions was offered last year, but the coverage was extended this year "due to popular demand," according to Don Magee of the SBC Executive Committee. Last year's coverage of the busiest day of the Salt Lake City convention drew 2,275 visitors.

This year's SBC sessions will be archived on both sites for later viewing, Magee said.

work abroad. Reflecting current trends, about two-thirds had been on short-term mission trips to other countries, actually served as short-term International Service Corps or journeyman missionaries, or were children of missionaries.

They were reminded by IMB President Jerry Rankin: "You go to serve an awesome, mighty God who is sovereign over the nations. Never lose that perspective. You have no higher priority than keeping your heart pure and walking with Him."

"You are venturing into Satan's territory, and whatever your assignment, you will be engaged in spiritual warfare," Rankin also told them.

"When government bureaucracy withdraws your visa, or when you are forced to evacuate by an outbreak of war or natural disaster, you will find it is easy to succumb to discouragement and hopelessness," he said.

"When the opposition of antagonistic Muslim or communist leaders exposes your platform, you will feel defeated, but never forget God is on his throne; turn to him in confidence and trust."

He urged the new missionaries to "keep the view from the throne. All that is swirling about you is not reality. God is in control."

"This is what the (Jewish) temple was all about," Rankin said. "It represented the presence of God in their midst, and when they sinned and failed, when they were defeated in battle, when there was famine and the showers of blessing were withheld, they were to remember to come to God in supplication and prayer and worship, and he would hear."

Rankin told of his early years on the mission field in Indonesia, when his zeal and optimism became mired in the difficulties of a hostile Muslim environment.

"As the months went by without significant response and the showers of blessing did not seem to be there, I began to doubt the power of God. I felt betrayed. Here I



INTO THE FIELD — James and Julie Kim, both originally from South Korea, receive missionary appointment certificates from International Mission Board President Jerry Rankin. The Kims were being appointed to serve in central and eastern Europe. (BP photo by Warren Johnson)

had committed my life, brought my family to a foreign country, paid the price in sacrifice to live in a strange culture, and God wasn't keeping his end of the bargain, but as I fell on my face before the Lord, he heard my supplication. In times of dryness and spiritual famine when no response is evident, be faithful in turning your heart toward him," Rankin said.

The appointment service took on a particularly personal perspective for Rankin, as his son Russell and daughter-in-law, Angela, were appointed missionaries. Russell will serve as an overseas correspondent/writer in Asia. Several months ago Rankin's daughter and her husband were appointed to serve in a restricted Last Frontier country.

At the end of the service, some 20 people walked the aisles to make a commitment to international missions.

## Looking back

### 10 years ago

Roy Clark, pastor of Lake Harbor Church, Brandon, is shot in the head at point-blank range by the husband of a woman Clark was counseling. Though doctors give his family no hope of survival, Clark is out of intensive care in three days and is recovering at Methodist Rehab Center in Jackson.

### 20 years ago

Responding to Christianity Today editor emeritus Harold Lindsell's recommendation that 500,000 liberal Southern Baptists just quietly leave the denomination, The Baptist Record editor Don McGregor asks who is counting, and how do you tell if a Southern Baptist is a liberal?

### 50 years ago

R. G. Lee, pastor of Bellevue Church, Memphis, and president of the Southern Baptist Convention, holds revival services at Rolling Fork Church, Rolling Fork. C. Lamar Alexander, minister of music at Highland Heights Church, Memphis, will lead the music. Van H. Hardin is pastor.

## EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK



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# Now that I have your attention...

**E**ditorials are supposed to be hard-hitting and thought-provoking. Editorials are supposed to elicit strong reactions. Editorials are supposed to move people to do something. If an editorial doesn't strive to accomplish those goals, it's just a waste of good ink and paper.

Sometimes editorialists hit a home run, and sometimes they have trouble getting to first base. Sometimes editorialists feel they're not even in the game, but that doesn't absolve them of their responsibility to get people's attention and hold it until the point of the whole writing exercise is made.

Given those standards, last week's editorial entitled, "In beer wars, let's take high moral ground," must have been a grand slam. It has certainly provoked a lot of thinking, elicited a host of strong reactions, and apparently moved more than a few people to do something.

The editorial, you will recall, dealt with ways Baptists could get the attention of brewing giant Anheuser-Busch over their homosexual advertising campaign. Tinged with sarcasm — a legitimate editorial technique as long as it's not overdone — and with "tongue firmly planted in cheek," three suggestions were offered for Baptists who publicly flout our well-known stance against the use of alcohol.

Among those of us who make a good faith effort to practice what we preach, however imperfectly we manage to do so, there is probably no greater exasperation than convincing fellow Baptists to adhere to our publicly-declared position in favor of total abstinence from alcohol.

Unfortunately, there are more imbibing Baptists than we like to admit. Talk with just about any Baptist minister, and he'll tell you how flippant we are about alcohol usage. It's enough to make cynics out of many of these fine, God-called men.

One Mississippi pastor recently said, "I'm so tired of seeing my church members hiding their beers under the restaurant table when they see me coming, that I've started engaging them in conversation for so long that their arm aches and their beer gets warm."

Another Mississippi pastor read from the pulpit an anonymous letter he received from an acknowledged nonbeliever. The letter detailed how members of his congregation had been seen in a bar on a hot summer afternoon, downing beer by the pitcher.

How did the letter writer know they were members of the church? All the offenders were wearing the church's softball team jerseys.

Apparently, a great many of us consider alcoholic beverages just another harmless soft drink. Nothing could be farther from the truth.

No wonder pastors become cynics about alcohol. They're the ones who have to bury babies killed in alcohol-related auto accidents and wives murdered in drunken rages, all brought on by this "harmless soft drink" that none of us are supposed to be using anyway.

Very few of us have been untouched by alcohol abuse. In the Perkins extended family it reaches back for generations — always for evil, never for good. Too many people, this writer included, have gripped a casket handle and carried a victim of alcohol abuse to a premature grave.

Because of alcohol, there are too many fatherless homes. There are too many motherless homes. There are too many neglected children. There are too many dead law enforcement officers. There is too

**"THE PREACHER ASKED ME TO RUN UP TO THE CHURCH AND FIGURE OUT HOW TO GROW A CROP IN THAT HARD SOIL."**



much misery and destruction.

If it took a little sarcasm to get the attention of the people who haven't yet absorbed the message any other way, last week's editorial hit its mark.

And the message is this: Alcohol is a malignancy on our culture, our world, and even the body of believers called Christians. Baptists believe that the use of alcohol for any reason at any time is just plain wrong — no exceptions.

Isn't it past time we all started living like we really believe that?

## GUEST OPINION:



### *My Africa experience*

By John McCall, member  
First Church, Clinton

learned more than I had ever known of the meaning of true commitment. These students literally left all to follow Christ, and they and other nationals are so excited about their Christian faith and calling.

I learned more than I had every known about the practice and power of prayer. I learned that, though there are radical differences between the African culture and ours, we can love them, be loved by them, and work together for the glory of God and the good of others.

Not the least of the joy of being in Africa was being near my son Dennis, daughter-in-law Margaret, and grandchildren Lauren, John, and Micah. They are International Mission Board agricultural evangelists in Kitumbi, Tanzania.

I thank God for all he did for us — and through us — as we sought to serve him in Africa.

McCall is pastor emeritus of First Church, Vicksburg, and retired chairman of the Mississippi College department of Christian studies and philosophy.

women learn many practical skills, such as quilting.

It was my privilege to teach theology and New Testament in the diploma and bachelor programs. I also had many preaching opportunities in our chapel and in churches.

I fell in love with the students. For me, three words describe them:

◆ Committed. They are committed to Christ, to their calling, and to their life's work.

◆ Intelligent. They study hard and ask penetrating questions — some of which I simply could not answer! They are responsive and articulate, and we had wonderfully stimulat-

ing discussions.

◆ Poor. Many students came to us, as well as to other faculty members, seeking help — from paper on which to take notes, to food to sustain them and their families. It broke our hearts not to be able to respond to every request.

I thank God for any small contributions I was able to make, realizing that I had the exciting privilege of touching the lives of men and women who are the future Christian leaders in eastern Africa.

However, the contributions they made to my own Christian life were far more than I could have made to their lives. I

# Baptists turn out to greet golfers and fans

By Carl M. White  
Associate Editor

First in a two-part series

When the famed U.S. Open of the Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA) came to Old Waverly Golf Club in West Point last week, Mississippi Baptists were there to greet them in the name of Christ.



VOLUNTEERS ON DUTY — Bill Duncan (left), director of missions for Golden Triangle Association in Columbus, and James Camp, member of Calvary Church, West Point, stand at their volunteer post outside one of the entrances to the Ladies U.S. Open at Old Waverly Golf Club in West Point. (Photo by Carl M. White)

Bill Duncan, director of missions for Golden Triangle Association in Columbus, said that early in the planning process for the prestigious tournament, he along with Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union (WMU) executive director Kay Cassibry; First Church, West Point pastor Gary Richardson; and others met with LPGA officials to determine ways to help with the mammoth event.

"We sat down with the operations managers and asked what they needed," Duncan said.

"They were thrilled at the level of interest and support (from Baptists)," added Cassibry.

There were two ways the group found Baptists could volunteer to help with the event.

One way was to be a LPGA volunteer, which involved paying \$85. Duncan noted that

those volunteers were given an LPGA shirt, food while working, a ticket to the event, and — for working four shifts — a round of golf at Old Waverly.

Cassibry and WMU consultant Kathy Burns paid the volunteer fee and began establishing relationships with LPGA officials.

The other way the group found Baptists could help was to assist the large numbers

cars to free parking places.

"We asked our volunteers to do three things. First, welcome everyone to Mississippi. Second, assist people in parking and whatever else they needed. Third, give out general information, like where to go in West Point," Duncan said.

The volunteers were alert for opportunities to share their faith.

"People have asked all kinds of questions like, 'What do the people of West Point do for a living?' Many were shocked that Mississippi had something like this (Old Waverly). We have such a bad image," Duncan said.

Tom Bryer is the head of Country Club Services. A native of New Jersey, Bryer is in the middle of 30-plus days away from home, coordinating such events. He sang the praises of Bill Duncan and the Baptist volunteers.

"We have had a good response from Bill Duncan and the Baptist volunteers. It's tough to get volunteers. In the Northeast, we could never get volunteers like this," Bryer said.

Bryer pointed out that on Saturday, the volunteers parked up to 7,500 cars. He estimated that Saturday's attendance was over 20,000.

"They (the volunteers) have been very polite, saying 'Yes ma'am' and 'Yes sir,' doing what they are supposed to be doing and not complaining. This is good advertisement for the work they (Baptists) do," Bryer said.

Because Bryer was not able to secure enough volunteers, Country Club Services paid two church groups who worked the event as a fund raiser for church projects.

The youth of First Church, West Point, worked three days for their mission trip. Pleasant Grove Church, an African-American congregation in Golden Triangle Association, also worked three days as a fund raiser.

Some of the other churches sending volunteers were: First Church, West Point; Pheba Church, Pheba; Pleasant Hill Church, Columbus; Calvary

Church, Aberdeen; Southside Church, Aberdeen; and Faith Church, West Point.

"I have had the opportunity to help all kinds of people," Duncan said. "A Korean TV crew came to the wrong entrance, so I carried them around to the media entrance and got to share with them along the way," he said.

Cassibry and Burns, as paid LPGA volunteers, worked with Karen Cheshire, LPGA director of volunteers, and Caroline Ellis, the assistant director.

One project they proposed and the LPGA accepted was preparing hospitality bags for the visitors to Mississippi.

"At first we were going to give out the hospitality bags at Old Waverly. Then the LPGA officials said no," Cassibry said.



## THE SECOND FRONT PAGE

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BAPTIST HOSPITALITY — Kay Cassibry (left), Mississippi Woman's missionary Union (WMU) executive director, and Kathy Burns (right), WMU consultant, give out hospitality bags to a group of unidentified golfing fans from New Orleans at a block party held in downtown West Point during the Ladies U.S. Open golf tournament. (Photo by Carl M. White)

## Miss. CP ahead of last year

Mississippi Baptists gave a total of \$1,894,930 through the Cooperative Program (CP) in May, according to Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board which disburses the funds.

The May amount brings 1999 total giving to \$11,600,138. The five-month total is \$796,272, or 7.37%, more than the amount given in the same period of 1998.

Also, the January-May total is \$513,518, or 4.63%, more than the pro rata budget calls for. The pro rata budget is figured by taking the total 1999 Mississippi Cooperative Program budget of \$26,607,890, dividing by 12, and multiplying by the number of months elapsed.

The Cooperative Program helps fund such programs as the six youth conferences at Gulfshore Baptists Assembly in Pass Christian which annually draw more than 3,000 teenagers, the All-State Youth Choir which is touring this week and will perform at the Southern Baptist Church Music Conference June 6-8 in Nashville, and summer camps at Central Hills Baptist Retreat near Kosciusko and Camp Garaywa in Clinton.

## SBC CP up for month, year

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Southern Baptist Convention Cooperative Program receipts for May were up more than 7% and the fiscal year's total more than 8% compared to last year, according to Morris H. Chapman, president and chief executive officer of the SBC Executive Committee.

For May 1999, CP receipts totaled \$13,780,657 compared to May 1998 of \$12,835,511, an increase of \$945,146 or 7.36%.

For the SBC fiscal year, October through May, CP gifts total \$112,779,048 compared to the previous year's total of \$104,076,805, an increase of \$8.7 million or 8.36%.

Designated gifts for the month of May were \$18,570,071 compared to the same month in 1998 of \$18,294,230, an increase of \$275,841 or 1.51%.

For the year to date, designated gifts total \$124,315,889 compared to the previous year's total of \$122,773,822, an increase of \$1.5 million or 1.26%.

For the SBC's Cooperative Program Allocation Budget, the May CP receipts exceeded the required monthly budget figure — \$12,917,143 — by more than \$863,514, or 6.69%.

# Church secretaries get 'royal proclamation'

By Carl M. White  
Associate Editor

Amid castles, thrones, crowns, and precious stones at Camp Garaywa in Clinton, the annual Mississippi Baptist Secretaries Association (MBSA) conference was held April 12-13.



**HEAD SECRETARIES** — Officers for the Mississippi Baptist Secretaries Association for 1999-2000 are (from left) Sandi Komurke, First Church, Madison, president; Vivian Taylor, Wayne Association, first vice president; Sandra Smith, Bay Springs Church, second vice president; Julia Field, Meadowood Church, Amory, secretary-treasurer (BR special photo)

"As daughters of the King, 'Princess Power' was chosen as the theme of the conference to instill us with power to enable us in our called professions," said Betty Anne Bailey, coordinator for the conference and bookkeeper for The Baptist Record.

The conference was sponsored by the Church Administration and Pastoral Ministries Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board (MBCB). Matt Buckles is department director and Kay McDonnell is department secretary.

The 150-plus secretaries in attendance had times of fellowship and learning designed to prepare them for more effective ministry at their churches, Bailey said.

"Worship leader Elisa McCurley presented challenging messages on Esther and Lydia, to assist in living happy ever after," she added.

Sandi Komurke of First Church, Madison, and presi-

dent of MBSA said, "Each year the MBSA conference seems to keep getting better. We have so many people who give of their time and talents to help make our conferences successful."

"I consider it an honor and a privilege to spend two days with women who have desire and heart for ministry in church. It is also a comfort to know that at any given time, we can call on anyone in this organization to be a prayer warrior in our times of need."

Leading individual conferences were: Emily Kennedy, coordinator of administrative services, Mississippi College School of Law; Juanita Schilling, secretary, Gillsburg Church, Oskyka, and Mississippi Association, Summit; Sherry DeVorss, ministry assistant, Calvary Church, Meridian, and music director at Macedonia Church, Meridian; Dolly Weger, owner and manager of DSW Bookkeeping, Inc., and author of "Safeguarding Your Church Offerings;" Margie Lunceford, music secretary, Broadmoor Church, Jackson; and Cheryl Townsend, pastor's secretary, Parkway Church, Clinton.

Other leaders were: Susan Polk of Mississippi College; Robin Nichols and Donna Glass, representing the Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention; Bonita Bridges, retired from Hinds County Extension Service; Sandi Komurke, administrative secretary, First Church, Madison; Bill Moak, media relations manager,

Baptist Health Systems, Inc.; and Sherry Carlson, graphic designer, Baptist Health Systems, Inc.

Conducting sessions to help in home and personal daily living were: Jan Clifton, interior designer and pastor's daughter; Candy Anderson, English teacher, Hillcrest Schools, and pastor's wife; Theresa Sanders, home economist, Cooperative Extension Service; Vickie Daniels, aerobic instructor, First Church, Jackson, and Fitness Plus; and Dot Hamilton, wife of Metro Association director of missions Eddie Hamilton.

The annual MBSA banquet was held in conjunction with the conference. Heraldng a royal theme, the banquet was presided over by Dot Simmons, outgoing MBSA president, and featured the Madrigal Singers from Madison Central High School in Madison.

Area representatives for MBSA include:

Area 1 — Peggy Sneed  
Area 2 — Jennifer Quarles  
Area 3 — Patricia Ethridge  
Area 4 — Robbie Linley  
Area 5 — Bessie Brown  
Area 6 — Barbara Sanders



**CONFERENCE PLANNERS** — Mississippi Baptist Secretaries Association members involved in planning the 1999 conference were (from left) Elise McCurley, First Church, Jackson; Betty Anne Bailey, The Baptist Record; and Kay McDonnell, Church Administration/Pastoral Ministries Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board. (BR special photo)

Area 7 — Faye Honea  
Area 8 — Paulette Morris  
Area 9 — vacant

A map of Mississippi showing the nine areas can be found in the 1999 Baptist Diary.

For more information about MBSA, contact Sandi Komurke at First Church, Madison, P.O. Box 400, Madison, MS 39130-0400. Telephone: (601) 853-3911.

## Ouachita musical tour ends in tragedy

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (BP) — It began as a two-week music ministry to Europe for 25 members of the Ouachita Singers. It abruptly ended in a crisis ministry amid the fiery crash of American Airlines flight 1420 just beyond the runway at Little Rock National Airport.

Among 145 people on board, nine have been confirmed dead, including James A. Harrison, 21, a member of the choir sponsored by Ouachita Baptist University in Arkadelphia, Ark. Harrison was a senior music major at Ouachita and was minister of music at Royal Church in Royal, Ark. At least one passenger reported that Harrison helped her to safety prior to his death.

The June 1 crash of flight 1420 from Dallas to Little Rock was the first fatal accident involving a U.S. commercial airline since 1997. Seeking to land at 11:51 p.m. amid torrential rain mixed with lightning, hail, and gusting winds, the plane bounced twice on the runway, slid into a landing light structure and split into pieces. Fire broke out as survivors scrambled to exit the wreckage and help one another to safety.

Crash survivor Dave Ozmun, assistant professor of communications at Ouachita, acknowledged "it's just a shock" that Harrison was among those killed in the tragedy. Affirming that he saw Harrison repeatedly demonstrate "the strength of his commitment and faith" throughout the choir trip, Ozmun added, "He's with the Lord. He's out of pain."

A number of heroic rescue efforts unfolded as survivors recounted the moments immediately following the crash.

Charles Fuller recalled seeing "flames coming from the front of the plane toward us." Jerking open an emergency exit door and stepping onto the wing, Fuller said, "I got my wife out and began pulling people out until there were no more people in that part of the plane. ... I called out three times and there was no response."

As he moved away from the burning wreckage, Fuller quickly found his wife and two of their daughters and guided them to safety. "I went all the way around the plane and there was my other daughter by herself, wandering around.... I found her by the grace of God."

Unaware of the extent of her injuries at the time, Fuller said she remains the most critically injured among the Ouachita group. Counting his blessings amid the traumatic chain of events, he said, "I'm thankful that my daughter is alive and has a good chance for survival. I'm thankful that we were able to go to Europe and share the gospel. I'm hopeful that God will bring comfort and healing to those who need it."

## Committee set to begin filling MBC boards, commissions

The Committee on Nominations of the Mississippi Baptist Convention (MBC) is soliciting recommendations for individuals to serve on MBC boards and commissions, according to Jay Richardson, committee chairman and pastor of First Church, Greenville.

A limited number of vacancies will be filled on:

- ◆ Board of Ministerial Education
- ◆ Christian Action Commission
- ◆ Education Commission
- ◆ Historical Commission
- ◆ Baptist Children's Village
- ◆ Miss. Baptist Health Systems, Inc. (Jackson)
- ◆ Baptist Memorial Health Care System, Inc. (Memphis)
- ◆ Blue Mountain College
- ◆ Mississippi College

◆ William Carey College  
◆ Miss. Baptist Convention Board.  
Nomination forms can be obtained from the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board Executive Director's office, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 968-3800 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651.

The nominating committee will work in conjunction with the heads of institutions and agencies in bringing a list of nominees to be approved by the messengers at the 1999 annual meeting of the MBC.

The 1999 MBC annual meeting will be held Oct. 26-27 at First Church, Jackson. Members of cooperating Mississippi Baptist churches who wish to serve as messengers should contact their pastor or church office.

# Hamblin named SWBTS distinguished alum

FORT WORTH, Texas (Special) — From a Mississippi church to the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board (HMB) to crusades worldwide, Robert Hamblin has been first and foremost an evangelist and he credits his education at Southwestern Seminary with helping to prepare him.

Hamblin, who has been named a 1999 distinguished alumnus of the Fort Worth school, graduated in 1954 with a bachelor of divinity and earned a doctor of theology in 1959. While he attended, Southwestern's focus on evangelism was very evident to him.

"There was very definitely a spirit of evangelism there," he said, reflecting on the emphasis to preach the gospel that had been instilled by the seminary's second president, L.R. Scarborough.

"I (also) enjoyed the emphasis Southwestern placed on biblical studies and missionary service," he said.

Hamblin's ministry has included serving as pastor of Harrisburg Church, Tupelo; as vice president and president of the Mississippi Baptist Convention; as a trustee for Southwestern for two years; and as a professor of evangelism at New Orleans Seminary. His dedication to evangelism was also reflected in his seven years as vice president for evangelism at the HMB (now the North American Mission Board), during which time Continuous Witness Training, a witness training program, was developed.

In addition, Hamblin's evangelistic crusades have taken him to Latin America, Europe, Africa, the Middle East, the Far East, and across the U.S. The global aspect of Hamblin's calling was also displayed in his work with the Lausanne Committee on

World Evangelization and the Evangelization Committee of the Baptist World Alliance.

A 1970 graduate of Southwestern said it was Hamblin's preaching that helped lead him to the seminary. R. Wesley Pitts, director of missions for Long Run Association in Louisville, Ky., remembered: "When I was making my decision concerning seminary attendance, a wise pastor told me to discover which seminary the best preachers attended."

Hamblin's "relevant, biblical preaching and his sermon references to his training at Southwestern were instrumental in the Lord's leading me to Southwestern," Pitts recalled. "He is one of the few preachers that I would travel a hundred miles to hear. I have done this many times because he always has a fresh word from the Lord."

Hamblin has a "pastoral heart" that has enabled him to encourage many, both in and out of the ministry, Pitts added. He "touched many who were in need during his tenure as a pastor, and he has helped many students in their times of discouragement."

He is also a "pastor's friend" who listens to and helps other shepherds, said Pitts.

"Many of us know first hand of his sacrifice of time and his wise advice to help us through troubled waters in our places of ministries," Pitts said.

Nathan Pillow, director of evangelism for the Arizona State Mission Board, said that Hamblin's number one priority has always been to make sure everyone has had a chance to at least hear about Christ.

"He has a very deep commitment to sharing the faith," Pillow said. "He practices what he preaches."

Hamblin, a North Carolina resident, said he was "surprised and grateful" at the award.

"I didn't expect it, but I felt greatly honored," he added.

The training at Southwestern, he said, "helped prepare me in every way. Both the biblical studies and the homiletical training helped me be a pastor in a growing church."

His ministry as pastor, professor, evangelist, and administrator, he said, "all goes back to what I was taught at Southwestern."



Hamblin

## All-State Choir in rehearsal



David Young, professor of music at William Carey College (WCC) in Hattiesburg, leads an orchestra rehearsal at the Mississippi Baptist All-State Youth Choir rehearsal camp at WCC. The choir is on tour June 6-11, including a stop at the Southern Baptist Church Music Conference in Nashville. (Photo by Carl M. White)

### GARDEN ROBBERS

The garden season is now well under way. Gardeners in our area of the country are beginning to see plants of every sort bearing the best of the growing season: tomatoes, peas, squash, corn, and whatever other veggie would taste good on your plate. Throw in a little cornbread and it makes your mouth water just to think about it.

I recently ran across a little article on "Garden-Robbers" with a subtitle indicating the number one thing that will rob your garden. I began playing a guessing game before I looked any further. I wondered to myself what was the number one garden-robb.

Neighbors? Nah, of course not. Maybe a lack of proper preparation of the soil? No, I was wrong again. Maybe a lack of water or fertilizer? No.

In fact, the article went on to indicate that most backyard gardeners have a tendency to over water and certainly to over fertilize their plants.

Then I figured it out: bugs! Vicious, green, yellow, and brown insects that chew, suck, and kill plants. That's got to be it. Wrong!

Then what, pray tell, is it that robs gardens of their effectiveness and greatly diminishes



## Directions

**Jim Futral**, executive director-treasurer  
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

the harvest? WEEDS! Wild, unproductive, "good-for-nothing" weeds of every shape, size, and sort. Weeds that look like vines, or grass, or onions, or flowers. They just spring up overnight and begin to rob the garden of the good things.

Weeds steal moisture, rob the soil of nutrients, and can prevent the plants from getting their needed sunlight. It is amazing that you can pamper and pet good plants and they will die right before your eyes, while on the other hand you can stomp, hoe, spray, and kick weeds and they just keep on doing their dirty work. Weeds rob the garden of its harvest.

While Jesus is the great physician, the source of all true wisdom, the master builder, and the one and only true Savior, he is also the grand gardener. Jesus knew farming, and the principles that he gave us for sowing, reaping, and dealing with weeds

is something we often overlook.

Do you recall the parable that Jesus spoke in Matt. 13:24, telling of a man who sowed his field with good seed? He was expecting a bumper crop of wheat. When the crop began to grow and put on its fruit, the workers saw that much of the crop was not wheat but tares. Tares are grass-like weeds that mimic wheat, until it begins to put on fruit, and there is no fruit to be found.

The workers said, "Let's go rip it up, tear them out!" The master said, "Leave them alone." It is quite a study and so often happens in the spiritual life. How often do we, in our desire to serve the Lord, do the best we can to prepare, to plant, to nurture — only to see the crop damaged and diminished by weeds?

For the gardener, the battle against weeds can be discouraging. For the believer, it can be a disheartening battle, too. What

can we do? It is often at that point that we do not listen to Jesus, and we take it upon ourselves to set out on a full-time ministry of "weed eradication."

We pull them up and chop them down, only then to notice that the roots might have been so intertwined with the good plants that it damaged or destroyed them. We may even become so obsessed with some weeds in our spiritual garden that we don't even notice some of the growth and even some of the wonderful, good fruit that is growing because we have been ordained by God as his master "weed-whacker."

I have known of some folks who spent most of their life, and energy, and resources, being mad at weeds. So what did the Lord tell us to do? It is an interesting, spiritual principle that is extremely difficult to do. He said, "Leave them alone and the Lord of the harvest, in his timing, will gather the good and then he will deal with the weeds."

God help us to keep on preparing, planting, nurturing, harvesting, and deliver us from the temptation of feeling called into full-time "weed-searching" ministry.

The Apostle Paul says it this way, "Be not weary in well doing for we shall reap if we faint not."

## SBC attendees asked to bring canned foods

ATLANTA (BP) — Georgia Baptists in Atlanta have been involved in "hugging" their city for Christ. Now they're asking Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) messengers to participate by bringing canned foods with them.

Messengers and guests coming to the SBC meeting in June will find barrels placed outside gates C, D, and E at the Georgia Dome for food collection. Arms Around Atlanta is asking all who attend the Woman's Missionary Union annual meeting at Wieuca Road Church and the Southern Baptist Convention to donate canned food.

For information on volunteering for any of the projects, call Liz Pearson at 1-800-RING-GBC or see the website: [www.armsaroundatlanta.org](http://www.armsaroundatlanta.org) for a complete list of opportunities.

## NAMES IN THE NEWS

### Homecomings

**Parkhill, Jackson:** June 13; Sunday School, 9:45 a.m.; 11 a.m. service; Delton Beall, guest speaker; Gary White, pastor.

**Woodhaven, Ocean Springs:** June 13; services, 11 a.m.; dinner on the grounds at noon; and concert at 1:30 p.m. by the BibleTones; Burl Cooley, morning message.

**Pleasant Grove, Brookhaven:** June 20; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; worship, 11 a.m.; pot luck meal following worship services; John Watts, guest speaker; Victor Newell, pianist; Kent H. Cochran, pastor.

**Byram, Jackson:** June 27; 175th anniversary; 10:30 a.m.; dinner on the grounds to follow; Roy Maine Jr., pastor.

**Tammie Worsham**, a member of Scotland Church, Winona, was among 32 individuals from 12 states who participated in Woman's Missionary Union's Writers Conference April 29-May 1 at the national headquarters in Birmingham. She will write for WMU's 2000-2001 preschool curriculum materials.



Worsham

**Dennis R. Atwood**, Clinton, received the degree of doctor of ministry from Eden Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., on May 21. He is also a graduate of Mississippi College and New Orleans Seminary. Atwood is pastor of Webster Groves Church, Webster Groves, Mo.

**Elizabeth Walton** received a bachelor of arts degree in Christian education from Florida Baptist Theological College, Graceville, Fla., during commencement services held on May 14. Walton is a former member of De Kalb Church, De Kalb.



Ramah Church, McCall Creek, recently ordained four men to the deacon ministry. Pictured (from left) are Mike Buckles; Glenn Lofton; Trent Bilbo, pastor; Donald Smith; and Gary Smith.

**Michael Pickens** of Liberty Church, Union Co., and **Will Strickland** of Meadowood Church, Amory, were the overall speak out winners at Lad/Crusader Day at Central Hills Retreat in Kosciusko. Pickens (left) won first place, and Strickland (right) won second place.



Pickens and Strickland

**Jeff Parker**, pastor, Southside Church, Jackson, and a former missionary to England and Zimbabwe, will be the featured speaker for a missions banquet at Morrison Heights Church, Clinton, June 26, at 6 p.m.

**David Sills**, pastor, Woodland Hills Church, Jackson, and former missionary to Ecuador, will direct music and give a missions testimony.

The banquet is one of



Parker

several events that will help to enable a senior adult mission team to go to England, Aug. 19-Sept. 1, to teach in holiday Bible clubs, at the invitation of the British Baptist Union and the International Mission Board, SBC. "We have opportunity to teach more than 700 children in Leeds," said Dennis Herrington, associate pastor, Morrison Heights Church, team leader, "and share with them how Christ can make a difference in their lives."

Tickets for the banquet will cost \$10. For more information, call (601) 924-0952.



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**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF AUBURN, ALABAMA** is seeking a pastor to lead a full-time staff of three in a church of 536 resident members in a university community. AFBC has an active program of education and spiritual growth for persons of all ages. We are known for our creative worship services and music programs, our progressive stances as a Baptist congregation, and the excellence of our ministerial staff. AFBC has a strong commitment to missions, and our members are personally involved in both local and global missions. Send inquiries and resumes to: Dr. Charlotte Sutton, Pastor Search Committee, First Baptist Church, 128 E. Glenn Avenue, Auburn, AL 36830-4702. Review of resumes will begin July 15 and continue until the position is filled.

**EVANGELIST WYMAN COPASS** scheduling "Power for Living" revivals & Bible Studies. Several God weeks in 2000. The following dates open in 1999: June 27-30; July 4-7; 18-21; 25-28; Aug. 1; 15-18; Sept. 12-15; Oct. 10 (p.m.) - 13; Nov. 14-17; 21-24; Call 270-683-6040 or 270-929-6434 or write Box 21224, Owensboro, KY 42304; E-mail: [WCMin@aol.com](mailto:WCMin@aol.com); Web site: [centralcityfbc.com/copass](http://centralcityfbc.com/copass).

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## SPECIAL OFFERING

### Editor:

The offering at Sandersville Church, Sandersville, on May 2 had no small change (not a penny, not a nickel, not a dime, not a quarter, not a fifty cent piece). Even the checks were for even dollars. The offering included all services (Sunday School, morning service, and night service). I have served as treasurer for six years and have not seen that happen before. I wonder if other church treasurers remember it ever happening in their churches?

Pat Lightsey  
Sandersville

## ROCKING GOOD TIME

### Editor:

May 6 was a special day for the WMU of First Church, Clinton, and some 50 shut-ins. For the second year the "Rocking Chair Party" took place.

The Clinton Rehab Center residents were transported to the church by medical van and aids accompanying them. The homebound of the community were brought to the church by friends and family members.

The program was a time of fun, singing, fellowship, and inspiration. The group was welcomed by Rob Boyd, pastor of First Church, Clinton. The kindergarten children sang and Bill Baker, former pastor of the church, presented a 15-minute

### musical program.

As one home-bound lady said, "The Rocking Chair Party" is a wonderful three-fold blessing: (1) to get comfortably situated in a rocking chair, (2) to be surrounded by other people who understand isolation, and (3) together thank and praise our God."

Indy Whitten  
Clinton

## SEARCHING FOR SENIORS

### Editor:

The manuscript to my book, "Like A Mighty River: Reflections on the Development of Senior Adult Ministry in Mississippi," is nearing completion.

One chapter in the book will name the churches of our state which organized a senior adult group (or club) prior to 1980. A brief history of each of these churches and their senior adult ministry will be included.

A number of churches have already responded to this appeal. If your church also falls within this category, and would like to be included, please send your material to me at the address below. For further information, please call me.

I would like for this listing to be as complete as possible. This will be the last public appeal for this information.

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## MS POSITIONS AVAILABLE

**TEACHERS NEEDED** for Mother's Morning Out Program (Wed. and Fri. 8 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.). Paid positions. Trace Ridge Baptist Church, Ridgeland, MS. Call 601-853-2572 or 601-856-2529.

**PART-TIME MUSIC MINISTER.** Sunday is only day of service required. Out-of-town applicants welcomed. Weekend accommodations will be provided. Send resume to: Providence Baptist Church, c/o Nina Taylor, 301 Fayette Davis Avenue, Cleveland, MS 38732.

**MINISTER OF MUSIC POSITION** open. Oakvale Baptist Church. Please send resume to Betty Daniels, 230 Connerly, Oakvale, MS 39656.

**PART-TIME MINISTER OF YOUTH** Bethesda Baptist Church, 13628 Midway Road, Terry, MS 39170. Inquiries to Ina Worthy, Personnel Committee, 15920 Midway Road, Terry, MS 39170.

**PART-TIME MINISTER OF MUSIC,** Bethesda Baptist Church, 13628 Midway Road, Terry, MS 39170. Inquiries to Ina Worthy, Personnel Committee, 15920 Midway Road, Terry, MS 39170.

**FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, WEST POINT** is currently accepting resumes for an Early Childhood Ministry Director. Prefer education or childhood development degree with certification and/or experience in the administration of a ministry based childcare program. Mail resume to 134 East Broad Street, West Point, MS 39773, ATTN: Personnel Committee.

**BI-VOCATIONAL MINISTER OF MUSIC** is needed at Gunter Road Baptist Church. Send resumes to Dick Steadman, 1220 Gunter Road, Florence, MS 39073. Call 601-932-2542 or 601-939-2542.

## THANKS FOR TROOPERS

### Editor:

On Tuesday afternoon, May 4, at approximately 2:45 p.m. on Highway 49 South just north of Mendenhall, our char-

### MINISTER OF EDUCATION/ADMINISTRATION

Immanuel Baptist Church of Lebanon, Tennessee (30 miles east of Nashville) is seeking an additional staff person. This 50 year old church of 3000 members needs an experienced person to assist us as we add 100+ new members per year. It is situated in a city that is experiencing rapid residential and commercial growth.

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ter bus carrying 30 senior adults was involved in an accident with an 18-wheeler.

Two state troopers were dispatched to the accident scene. They were James Smith (C-09) and Vince Pruitt (C-17). Words are inadequate to tell you how professional and courteous these officers were. Never have I seen two officers more caring than these two men. After the scene was secure and the injured had been transported to Simpson General Hospital, these officers went to the nearest mini-mart and purchased bottled water and cups for our senior adults.

With all of the negative publicity that our law enforcement officers take, I wanted to say a word of commendation and encouragement to and about our state patrol. Thank you for providing the citizens of Mississippi with such quality personnel.

Jimmy Little, min. of music  
First Church, Laurel

## WORSHIP FOR GRANTED?

### Editor:

We have so long had the privilege to worship as we please that we in some ways let it be taken for granted, not realizing that it is a God-given privilege set in place by our founding fathers and mothers.

We have almost lost the significance of the freedom to worship that so many parts of this world don't have. Even in the days of the Colonies there was no such thing as freedom to worship. Some were punished just because they failed to practice infant baptism and some were punished if they did. Many gave their lives that we could have the freedom we

have and often fail to appreciate or don't understand.

Someone paid for this freedom we have. Christ died for it. Christ said, "Love one another as I have loved you." Instead we have so much backbiting and faultfinding that can destroy true worship and hinder a Christian fellowship. I may not like what you say but I'm not for destroying you for saying it. One old grouch can poison the whole atmosphere in a fellowship.

I heard one man say that where he attends, backbiting destroys some of the worship that he had looked forward to. I doubt one finds that true relationship with God knowing that there is someone sitting not far from them having their minds filled with hate.

God will never allow us to be the church God honors until we find that binding cord of love even for the unlovable.

Tom Walden  
Jackson

## ROMANIA TRIP PLANNED

### Editor:

Needs for our Romanian mission trip are great, and we need your help:

● Pray for the Romanian-American Mission trip, June 23-July 7.

● Collect these over-the-counter items: vitamins (children and adult); pain killers (ibuprofen and acetaminophen); and antacids (Tums, Rolaids, etc.).

If you cannot go, please get involved in whatever way you feel led. For more information, call Wayne Ball at (601) 825-3365 or Cheryle at (601) 825-9003.

Wayne Ball  
Brandon



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

*Unsigned letters will not be printed. No multi-copy or form letters will be used.*

*Each correspondent must include an address and telephone number for verification. In special instances, name may be withheld at writer's request and editor's discretion.*

*Please include the name of cooperating Mississippi Baptist church where correspondent is a member. (Mississippi Baptists' letters will receive priority when space is limited.)*

*Letters must be limited to 250 words. All correspondence is subject to editing.*

*Correspondents should refrain from personal attacks. The opinions expressed in letters to the editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.*

*No more than one letter from any individual will be printed during a three-month period.*

*When in the judgement of the editor a given issue has received sufficient attention, correspondence dealing with it will no longer be published and a notice will be printed to that effect.*

## Study plan tops half-million

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — More than half a million Southern Baptists are developing leadership and ministry skills and growing in their faith through the Christian Growth Study Plan, according to statistics recently released by LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville, Tenn. The plan is designed to assist churches by providing a systematic approach to learning in two categories: 1) leadership and skills development and 2) Christian growth. Participants earn "credits" toward diplomas in one of the two categories. A diploma requires a minimum of 10 hours in group or individual study time. For more information about the plan and to receive a free catalog, call (615) 251-2525 or write to: Christian Growth Study Plan, 127 Ninth Ave. North, Nashville, TN 36234-0117.

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## JUST FOR THE RECORD



First Church, Crystal Springs Acteens (7th graders)



First Church, Crystal Springs Acteens (8th graders)



First Church, Crystal Springs Acteens (9th graders)



First Church, Crystal Springs Acteens (10th graders)

**First Church, Crystal Springs**, recently held a recognition service for junior high and high school girls who participated in the Acteens program. Seventh-graders who received their crown and attained the status of Queen (pictured) were Morgan Sprouse, Allison Bryant, Mallory Sullivan, and Olivia Lang.

Eighth-graders who received their scepter and attained the status Queen with Scepter (pictured) were Marcy McDonald and Lori Walters.

Ninth-graders who received their cape and attained the status of Queen Regent (pictured) were Angela Bryant, Christy Walters, Bethany Harris, Sallie Burt, and Abby Berry.

Tenth graders who received their pin and attained the status of Queen in Service (pictured) were Jessica Harris, Sarah Beasley, and Sarah Beth Watkins.

**Center Terrace Church, Canton**, will present Andy Gazak in concert, June 13 at 7 p.m. For more information, call the church at (601) 859-4186.

**Calvary Church, Canton**, will have James Young as guest speaker at the morning service on June 13 at 10:15 a.m. Young, a native of Thomastown, and his wife Gwen, a native of Ridgeland, have been missionaries in Bangladesh for over 20 years. The Youngs will be in the States for the month of June before returning to Bangladesh to continue their ministry.

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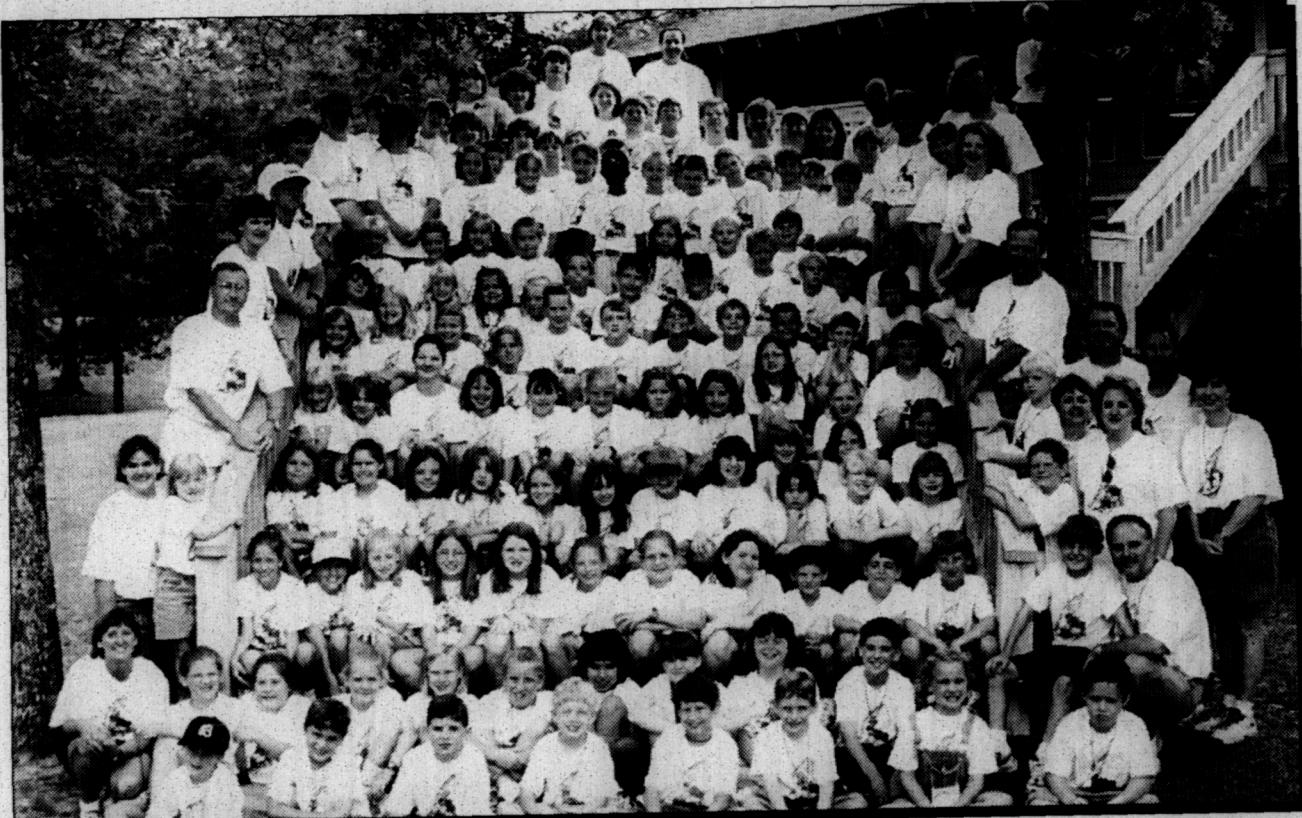
- Climb Mt. Sinai as did Moses
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**Galilee Church, Gloster**, "Celebration 175...1824-1999, Angels Among Us" third special service will be held June 20. Guests will include DeVon Byrd, former pastor. The Harry Brigance family will have a special part on the program. The third 35 years of the church's history will be presented by Lena Waller. There will be a church-wide pot lunch at the conclusion of the service.

**Jeffrey L. Kellum** of Oxford received the master of divinity degree in the May 1999 graduation at Southeastern Seminary, Wake Forest, N.C.

**First Church, Brandon**, held its three-day camp for first-fourth graders at Twin Lakes Conference Center on May 24-26. The campers gave \$275 to the International Mission Board for the Kosovo relief effort

**New Sight Church, Brookhaven**, will have Dedication and Victory Day for the Family Life Center on June 13. The new facility is 17,000-sq. ft. with a gym, kitchen, fellowship hall, and activity room, with plans for more Sunday School rooms. Activities will include general assembly, 9:45 a.m.; Sunday School, 10 a.m.; dedication worship service, 10:40 a.m.; and open house and reception, 2-4:30 p.m.



First Church, Brandon, three-day camp

## STAFF CHANGES

**Chester Church, Ackerman**, has called **Jason Sebren** as minister of youth effective May 2. A native of Starkville, Sebren is a senior at Mississippi State University. He previously served as volunteer youth intern at First Church, Starkville.

**East Heights Church, Tupelo**, has called **Terry Ledbetter** as pastor effective May 23. Ledbetter, a native of Amory, is a graduate of Blue Mountain College, Southwestern Seminary, Midwestern Seminary, and is currently a doctor of ministries candidate at Midwestern Seminary.

**North Columbia Church, Columbia**, has called **Mike Grenn** as pastor effective May 3. A native of Lincoln County,

Grenn received his education at Mississippi College, William Carey College, and presently is enrolled at New Orleans Seminary. He formerly pastored



Galilee, Rockport; Eden, Yazoo City; Crooked Creek, Silver Creek; Cedar Grove, Columbia.

**Hueston Adkins**, former pastor of Sylvarena Church in Smith County has been called as director of missions for Jasper County Association effective April 1. Adkins is a native of Jasper County.

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# Youth revivalists of late 1940s to convene

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (BP) — What started as a student-led revival by Baylor University students in April 1945 and repeated again the next spring quickly spread throughout Texas and the South and became a youth revival movement that had an impact on the life and growth of Southern Baptists.

A half-century later, many of the original evangelists will gather for a public symposium on the movement in Birmingham, Ala., June 18-20. Convened by Samford University and its Beeson Divinity School, the three-day event is open to the public and will feature the personal perspectives and insights of various leaders of the movement and dialogue with the audience.

The movement began as the result of a prayer meeting in the dormitory room of a young Japanese-American student, Reiji Hoshizaki, recounted Bill O'Brien, director of Beeson's Global Center. Along with fellow-student M.D. Oates, Hoshizaki was convicted of the need for revival on the campus.

Hoshizaki contacted Bob Denny, Baptist Student Union director at the time who later served as executive director of the Baptist World Alliance, to get a "big-name" evangelist for the revival. Denny told young Hoshizaki to "do the revival yourself," O'Brien recounted.

Another student, Bruce McIver, helped raise \$1,100 for the expenses, and the first youth-led revival was conducted in April 1945 under a tent near the Baylor campus. The event was so successful that a second revival was held the next year. This time, McIver raised \$2,200, and the movement spread beyond the campus.

An estimated 15,000 attended a revival in Dallas. Names like Buckner Fanning, Bo and Dick Baker, Frank Boggs, Howard Butt, Bob Harris, Reiji Hoshizaki, Bruce McIver, Ralph Langley, Jess Moody, Asa Couch, Jack Robinson, Foy Valentine, Charles Wellborn, W.F. Howard, and W.J. Wimpee became household words as their success and effectiveness spread through the Southeast. All of these are expected to

be present and participate in the upcoming Beeson symposium.

Within a couple of years, the movement had spread throughout the South. On Sunday, June 26, 1949, an estimated 5,000 people packed the municipal auditorium in Birmingham, Ala., for the closing night of a week-long, city-wide revival.

A two-page picture spread in The Alabama Baptist carried a banner headline, "Birmingham Young People Throng City Auditorium to Hear Texas Youth Revival Team." Frank Boggs was the song leader with Jack Robinson, Charles Wellborn, and Howard Butt sharing the preaching assignments.

The movement carried over into the mid-1950s when a second wave of young people they had touched went to college. By the mid-1960s, summer mission programs had begun by state conventions, which was an outgrowth of the youth-led revival movement.

For more information, call O'Brien's office at (205) 870-2170.

## JUST FOR THE RECORD



Kernop and Hamilton

First Church, Columbia, held its annual mission recognition service on May 16. There were 109 boys and girls including 27 girls achieving Acteen advancements who were honored.

Cloverdale Church, Natchez, plans to relocate to 319 Highland Boulevard, and change its name to Highland Church.

The new facility will consist of a larger education building and a temporary sanctuary until a permanent sanctuary is built in front of the present construction site. Pictured in front of the future home of Cloverdale Church is David McGuffee, pastor, and his wife Janie.



Highland Church, Natchez

Nettie Marie Kernop, member of Ridgecrest Church, Madison, recently donated 200 acres of land in northern Madison County to Metro Association for

the purpose of building a Baptist camp. The deed was presented at a luncheon on May 10 honoring Kernop. Pictured is Eddie Hamilton, executive director for Metro Association, accepting the deed from Kernop.



Three ministers of music from Mississippi have been invited by Chuck Kelley, president of New Orleans Seminary (NOBTS), to sing for the Alumni Luncheon at the Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta this summer. Ben Caston, Roseland Park Church, Picayune; Marvin Miller, First Church, Poplarville; and Bradley White, Thirty-eighth Avenue Church, Hattiesburg; are also students at NOBTS. Pictured (from left) are White, Miller, and Caston.



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## Southern Sem. awards degrees

Southern Seminary, Louisville, Ky., awarded degrees to 148 students in its 183rd commencement during a May 21 ceremony. Anthony O'Neal of Wiggins received the Master of Arts in Christian Education degree. His home church is Temple Church in Hattiesburg.

## Lottie Moon goal surpassed

Cold Springs Church, Collins, set a Lottie Moon goal of \$2,000 and received a total of \$3,000.39.

# Noah's Ark search no made-for-TV movie

TAZEWELL, Tenn. (ABP) — Recent months have witnessed a revival of interest in Noah's Ark, culminating in a made-for-TV movie advertised as the event of a lifetime but criticized by many Christians for taking too many liberties with the Bible story.

Four east Tennessee men took their interest in the subject to an extreme, leading them on an adventure to Turkey to view what some claim is the final resting spot of Noah's Ark.

Attorney Ron Leadbetter, private investigator Barry Rice, physician Jerry Lemler and his son, Russell, now a West Point cadet but then a high-school senior, are not explorers.

They are ordinary men who set off with intrigue in their eyes and hope in their hearts to the mountains of Turkey, traveling to a region explored by few before them. Recently they have chronicled their difficult journey in a book entitled "Journey to Noah's Ark," which contains rare photographs of the site.

A long-time adventurer, Leadbetter has taken many tumultuous trips in the past, usually traveling with whatever vagabond party of friends he can cajole into coming along. He is known for taking the kind of trips that most vacationers avoid. His travels have taken him to parts of the world that are not well explored, including several that are exotic and extremely dangerous.

"He has never been one to do the standard golfing in Saint Andrews or touring the vineyards of France," said traveling companion Lemler.

Leadbetter's interest in the

Noah's Ark site began after he met an amateur archeologist from Nashville, Ron Wyatt. Wyatt, who traveled through the mountains of Turkey many times in the 1970s and '80s, was convinced he had found Noah's Ark and was instrumental in helping to set up a visitor's center presently located at the site.

The meeting with Wyatt fueled Leadbetter's desire to see the site for himself, prompting a trip that took three years to plan.

The exact location of Noah's Ark is disputed. Some dismiss the Old Testament story as a myth borrowed by Jews from an ancient Babylonian epic. Many people believe the Bible story is literally true, however, and some suspect remains of the Ark may still be hidden on Mt. Ararat, a nearly 17,000-foot peak in remote eastern Turkey. Others argue the Bible speaks of the "mountains of Ararat." Lemler and others believe the word "mountains" holds the clue.

"The plural mountains is the key, which does not necessarily mean Ararat itself," said Lemler. Wyatt's discovery was indeed several miles west of Mt. Ararat, on what is known as the "Duripinar site."

Lemler said studies on the site have been inconclusive. Several U.S. expeditions to the site over the last 15 years have said it is nothing more than a rock formation with no significance for archeology. Some tests have claimed the object is composed of decayed wood, but other researchers say all evidence it could be Noah's Ark is based on assumptions and not science. While there

have been many claims of a discovery of Noah's Ark, none can be verified beyond a reasonable doubt, according to ark researcher B.J. Corbin.

The formation matches the dimensions of Noah's Ark as identified in the Bible. It is about the length of one-and-one-half football fields.

The site was not easily reached, down 10 miles of dirt roads and over the mountains from Iran. Americans have been discouraged from visiting, and in recent years the visitor's center has been closed.

"Right now because of the even further escalation of hostilities in the area, the site has been closed and we, as far as we know, are the last westerners to have visited the site," Lemler said.

Lemler's group was fortunate enough not only to see the site, but the guard Hassan, also known as the "keeper of the Ark," allowed them to walk out onto area to explore it firsthand.

The men say the walk is what convinced them. They found hundreds of seashells on a site 50 miles away from the nearest body of water, and it is a freshwater lake.

"It was not like someone took a truckload of sea shells and spread them out for our pleasure," Lemler said. "They were there on the boat and in the immediate vicinity, but nowhere else in that region."

Lemler believes if the object is not Noah's Ark, it is an amazing engineering feat by someone. All four men say they are convinced it is a boat on a mountain with no other explanation of how it got there.

"We are not talking about someone out in a desert who sees a flying saucer landing," he said. "We are talking about a physician, a West Point cadet, an attorney, and a private investigator — four people who generally have a fair level of smarts, are inquisitive and are not four nuts who had to find something."

After returning to the United States, the men began to speak to various civic and religious groups about their experiences, showing video, photographs, shells they collected, and stones they believe were used for ballast on the Ark. Each group was curious and wanted to learn more. That prompted the idea for writing a book.

Lemler describes the experience in Turkey as awe inspiring. "It is like when I was a kid and touched the Liberty Bell for the first time only on a much larger scale," he said.

Cathy Casper, author of this article, is a reporter at the Claiborne Progress in Tazewell, Tenn. This story is used with permission. The book "Journey to Noah's Ark" is available at bookstores and on the Internet at [www.lakemoor.com](http://www.lakemoor.com)



## LifeAnswers

Ron Mumboer, Ph.D.  
Minister of Counseling  
First Church, Jackson

I am trying to understand suicide from a Christian perspective. Can you recommend books and support groups?

Suicide has many perspectives. There is the perspective, "I am miserable, and I cannot handle the difficulties that life has thrown at me. Therefore, I must get out." There is the view, "I am responsible for my own happiness. No one or thing can help me so I must take matters in my own hands and escape."

The first view is the result of depression and the inability to see things as they really are. The second view is the result of a self-indulgent society that has made man the center of the universe. As Christians we need to understand both views, not stand in judgement, and love the hurting person into seeing themselves as God sees them. This is often difficult because suicidal people often do not communicate the seriousness of their feelings.

The hardcover book was delivered to Muslim countries' embassies in Paris on April 17 and to various entities in London such as the BBC on April 20. On May 15, it was delivered to Arabic, Hebrew, and English periodicals in Jerusalem.

—

An overview of academic and theological theories about — and challenges to — the Qur'an and Islamic history appeared in the January 1999 issue of The Atlantic Monthly.

Our Christian role is to be a good listener and to be observant of changes in the people around us. People get burdened with loads. We need to be aware of our own loads, but also assist others in dealing with their loads. Nikki Chisolm leads a support group called "Survivors of Suicide" (SOS) at First Church, Jackson. She recommends these books:

- After Suicide, by John H. Hewett.
- Good Grief, by Granger Westberg.
- Riches Stored in Secret Places, by Verdell Davis (for wives of suicide victims).
- The Bereaved Parent, by Harriett Sarnoff Schiff.

A Christian-based suicide survivors support group can also help with a list of suicide, grief, and inspirational books, along with a packet of helpful information for people attending the support group for the first time.

Send your counseling questions to LifeAnswers c/o The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Please be brief. Name is not required. Remember: in time of crisis, your pastor can make recommendations on your counseling needs.

Jesus Christ  
Requests the Honor  
of Your Presence  
in Heaven!

### YOU CAN RESPOND RIGHT NOW!

Simply share the following prayer with God in your own words:

1. Lord, I admit that I need you. (*I have sinned.*)
2. I want forgiveness for my sins and freedom from eternal death. (*I repent.*)
3. I believe Jesus died and rose from the grave to forgive my sins and to restore my relationship with you. (*I believe in Jesus.*)
4. By faith, I invite Jesus Christ into my life. From this time on, I want to live in a loving relationship with him. (*I receive Christ as my Savior and Lord.*)

But as many as received him, to them he gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in his name (John 1:12).

If you make a decision for Jesus Christ today, contact a local Baptist church for spiritual guidance.

## MC confers honorary degrees



Mississippi College (MC) conferred two honorary degrees during its commencement ceremonies on May 8. John Stanley Hattox Jr. received the honorary degree of Doctor of Science. Zachary Taylor Hederman Sr. received the honorary degree of Doctor of Laws. Pictured (from left) are Hattox; Howell W. Todd, president of MC; and Hederman.

# FAMILY BIBLE SERIES

## Original design

**Genesis 2:4-25**

By Grant Arinder

Every see needs a saw. My New Testament professor once spoke about the importance of "balance" in life. I'll never forget this lesson.

All around we see the beauty and harmony of things in balance, and the destruction that results when this balance is upset. See-saws are great illustrators of this truth. One youth I worked with (let's call her See) came home from camp with a bruised ego (and behind) after her friend "Saw" abruptly jumped off the other end. Every "See" needs a "Saw" to enjoy the ride.

A careful reading of Genesis 2 reveals a beautiful balance in



Arinder

God's plan. Then, as now, it is when we indulge some things or neglect others that the equilibrium is upset.

When this happens a painful crash follows. Let's examine the balance in God's original design.

**The man: flesh and spirit (2:7).** Often at funerals we hear people say, "from dust to dust." They are referring to the fact that man was formed from the dust of the ground and will eventually return to it. This sobering truth is balanced by the fact that into this creature of such lowly origins was breathed the very breath of God. Physically we may begin and end in dust, but spiritually we both begin and end in spirit.

Remembering that terrestrial means earthly and common, you might say that in God's original design man was both a terrestrial and an extraterrestrial being. He was formed out of common ground by an uncommon God who breathed into him the breath of the divine. For that reason we must nourish both our physical and spiritual dimensions. When one is neglected and the other indulged, the equilibrium is upset and a painful crash is sure to follow.

**The place: aesthetics and utilitarianism (2:8-9).** This passage reveals a balance between the value of God's creation based on its beauty and its usefulness. Most people have missed the wonderful balance in verse 9.

When it comes to environmental issues our country is

greatly divided. On one end of the spectrum are those who worship the creation and give divine importance to every living thing (pantheism). On the other end are those who look at forest and only see a dollar (greed).

Gen. 2:9 strikes a wonderful balance. Here we see the value of God's creation both in aesthetics and usefulness. God made trees that were both beautiful to the eyes and useful for other purposes. We should value the creation for both reasons. When one is neglected and the other indulged, well, you get the point.

**The assignment: privilege and responsibility (2:15-17).** This passage reveals balance between privilege and responsibility. God gave us a garden; he also gave us a task. He asked us to take care of it. There is no privilege without responsibility. The fruit of the harvest is impossible without the labor of the land. Privilege and

responsibility go together. We must not indulge privilege and neglect responsibility.

**The companion: man and woman (2:18-25).** Perhaps this passage above all others reveals the wonderful balance in God's design. This text reveals the harmony between man and woman. Two words illustrate this to us; "suitable," and "helper."

The text says that the woman was suited to the man. They complimented each other physically and emotionally. In other words, they balanced each other.

The word helper does not imply that the woman is subservient. If anything it implies that the man is not self-sufficient and needs help.

The text reveals a balance between independence and interdependence. As stated earlier, every see needs a saw.

Arinder is pastor of First Church, Belzoni.

## LIFE AND WORK

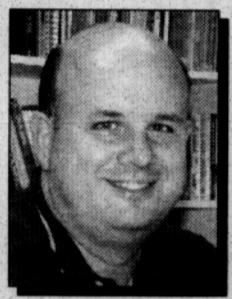
### Renew Your Covenant Relationships

**Malachi 2:1-16**

By Tony Martin

We live in a throw away society. About eighteen months ago I bought a computer which at the time was a miraculous machine. Now, compared to the computer I use at work, I have a technological dinosaur... or so I'm told.

It's one thing to throw away paper plates and burned out light bulbs. It's something totally different to throw away something because it's not the latest, newest, or most advanced. Unfortunately, the tendency to view things as temporal often carries over to one's commitments. Commitments can just as easily be viewed as expendable. "When we get older," I overheard a second-grader tell his lit-



Martin

tle girlfriend recently, "I want you to be my first wife."

Commitments are bound up in the concept of "covenants." If you borrow money to buy a car, you enter into a covenant with the lender, with a commitment to pay back your loan. Witness the number of personal bankruptcies, and you'll see that financial covenants are often neglected.

Failure to honor a covenant relationship is breaking faith with another party or parties in a relationship. This problem plagued Judah, and Malachi addressed this problem. Why should we honor covenant relationships?

To ensure true instruction

(2:1-9). In this passage God reminds Judah that in the original covenant he promised to bless those who were obedient. The Law was clear as to how the people should conduct themselves, but they weren't faithful to these plans for holy living. Moreover, the priests

who were responsible for teaching the people the truth denied the truth. They were personally disobedient, and they taught falsely. By ignoring the call to obedience, the people became faithless and cruel. Instead of knowing life and peace and righteousness, they became corrupt.

If you're a leader in your church, then you are held to a higher standard. Be careful to rightfully instruct those entrusted to you by God.

**To keep faith with God and others (2:10-12).** God's people are shown to have broken relationships, both with God and each other. Even keeping religious tra-

tions doesn't please God. This corruption was inexcusable. In spite of the people's relationship with God, and the unity they should have felt with each other, they were depraved. God called it detestable, and in the midst of the presence of God they sinned by marrying pagan wives who worshiped false gods.

It is possible to keep earthly covenants by an act of our will. If our relationship with God is strong and secure, then we have the resources to make those earthly commitments more lasting and meaningful. Faith in God translates into lasting covenants with others, as long as our relationship with him is true and pure.

**To protect the sacredness of marriage (2:13-16).** Malachi gets specific here. When God told Judah that he wouldn't answer their prayers (a frightening thought), the people whined: "Why?" They had been going through all the proper motions, praying in earnest, shedding tears, generally making a scene.

Why didn't God pay any attention to their offerings?

Simply put, the people weren't being faithful to one of the most fundamental of all covenants, that of marriage. They had condoned and sanctioned divorce. By breaking this covenant, their worship became unacceptable to God. This was not just divorce that came about as a result of a partner's sin, or by an unwillingness to work at being married. It was divorce that came about as a result of total depravity. Certainly we are supposed to uphold God's standard for marriage, but we should lovingly minister to those who have experienced divorce.

Faithlessness is something God simply cannot stand. God puts a high value on covenant relationships and judges those who willingly violate them. Fortunately, God supernaturally gives us the ability to be faithful to those covenants he has placed before us.

Tony Martin is minister of education at First Church, McComb.

## EXPLORE THE BIBLE

### Discipline and Forgiveness

**2 Cor. 1:23-2:17**

By Ted Dukes

Alex Haley, the author of Roots, said, "If you ever see a turtle on a fence post, you know he didn't get there by himself." The Apostle Paul took an immature, confused congregation at Corinth and worked with them that they might grow in their faith, but, as we discover in his writing, it was not always easy.

In response to disturbing reports from the church at Corinth, he had written his first letter (1 Corinthians) and intended to follow it up with a visit, but when Timothy arrived in Corinth with this letter he was unable to enforce Paul's directions. It may have been Timothy who brought news of further



Dukes

trouble to Paul which compelled the Apostle to visit Corinth right away. This proved to be a confrontational experience, painful for Paul and his converts alike (II Corinthians 2:1). Opposition came primarily from one person who questioned Paul's authority while the rest of the congregation sat back and took no action in Paul's defense. The result was a breach in Paul's relationship with what had become a defiant, divided, and unproductive church.

Paul sent Titus with a scathing second letter, a part of which may or may not be II Corinthians 10-13, but which most scholars presume lost. The letter had just the effect Paul had hoped, and when

next he met Titus the news from Corinth was good. Paul then wrote II Corinthians in which he called upon God to witness the intensity of his good-will (1:23) and poured out his heart-felt affection for them (2:1-4). Paul desired to be a blessing to the Corinthians, even as he expected them to be a blessing to him (2:2).

How true are the words of Proverbs 27:6, "Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful." Paul knew the difference in hurting someone and harming them. He knew his words of correction would be painful to those he loved, but he had an obligation to boldly speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15). Church discipline is not a very popular subject in a day when we struggle just to get people to come to church. Unfortunately, in our zeal to boost our atten-

dance we run the risk of purchasing peace at the price of accountability. Nevertheless, there can be no spiritual peace in our lives or in our churches without purity (James 3:13-18).

Paul called upon the church to exercise discipline with the one who questioned his integrity, not to get even. It was a test of the moral fiber and convictions of the church (1:9). The Corinthian Christians responded by disciplining the member in question. "Now," Paul said, "It is time to forgive and restore" (2:6-8). Keep in mind what the Apostle said about forgiveness of others being the natural by-product of God's forgiveness of our sins (1:4).

Paul called for the church to affirm their love for this individual, "lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up by much sorrow" (1:7-8). Not only for that person's sake should this forgiveness and restoration take place, but Paul also said to forgive for the church's sake (1:9-

10), lest we "give place to the devil" by harboring an unforgiving spirit (Eph. 4:27-32).

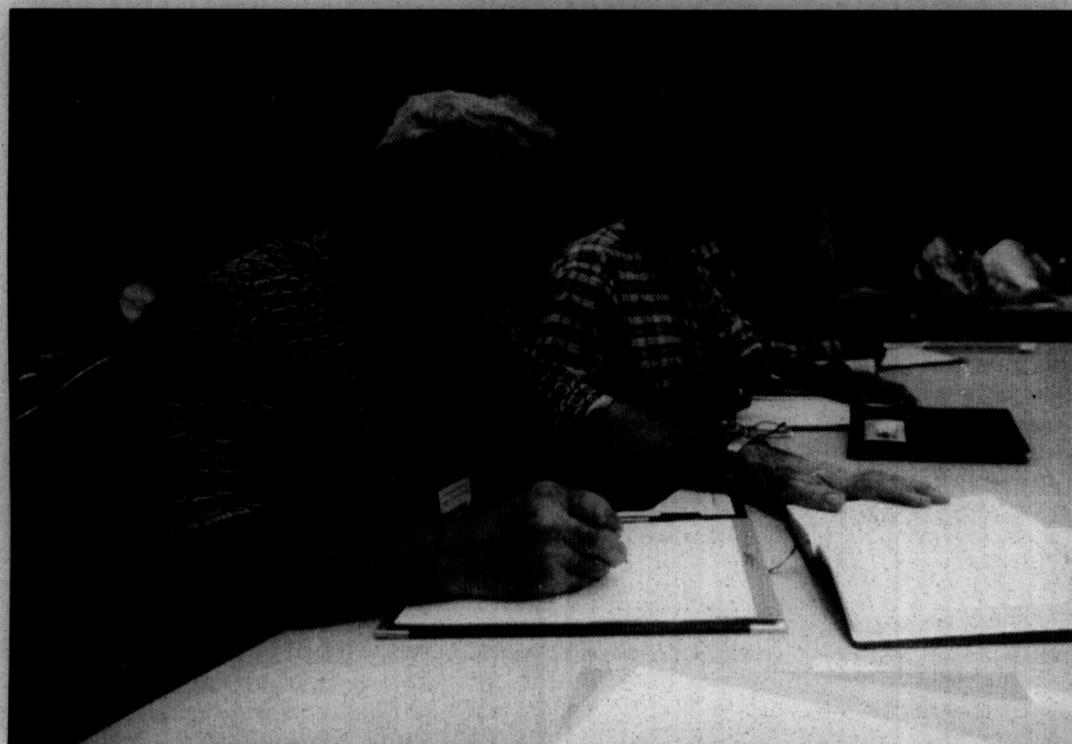
It seems at first glance as though Paul's plans had completely fallen apart (1:12-13), but God was still in control (1:14). Regardless of how our plans may go awry, disappointment is not defeat for the Christian. Paul reminds us that God always leads the believer to ultimate victory (Rom. 8:28).

Given the Gentile background of his audience, Paul's reference to our "triumph in Christ" may have been a carefully chosen way of painting a picture of the triumphal procession of the victorious Roman army marching back home to the adulation of the multitude. Incidentally, this is the same Greek word used in Col. 2:15 to describe how Jesus triumphed over the supernatural powers of the world by going to the cross on our behalf.

Dukes is pastor of First Church, Crystal Springs.

# Hispanic meet draws international crowd

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP) — Forty-one evangelical leaders and Christian book distributors from 11 countries and one U.S. territory attended the first international Hispanic trainers meeting May 27-29 at LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville.



**FOCUS ON HISPANICS** — Daniel Robayo of Venezuela takes notes during the first International Hispanic Trainers Meeting held May 27-29 at LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville. Forty-one evangelical leaders and Christian book distributors from 11 countries and one U.S. territory attended the conference to learn about LifeWay's materials and how they can be used in the local church. (BP photo by Jim Veneman)

According to Luis Lopez, a consultant in LifeWay's international department, the purpose of the conference was to introduce Christian leaders in Spanish-speaking countries to the wealth of products and services offered by LifeWay and share ideas on how to use them in local churches.

## TV ratings having no content effect, study says

WASHINGTON (BP) — The television ratings system adopted in 1997 has done nothing to reverse the tide of sex, violence, and offensive language in prime time. In fact, the content of programs on broadcast networks has become much worse, according to a recently released study.

A comparison of the two-week November sweeps periods from 1996, just before the ratings system was instituted, to 1998 found the combined content of sex, violence, and foul language increased by more than 30%, the Parents Television Council (PTC) reported. Sexual content rose by more than 42%. Offensive language increased by more than 30%. Only violence, after peaking in 1997, had a slight increase from 1996 to '98.

The PTC study covered six networks: ABC; CBS; NBC; Fox; UPN, and WB.

ABC's content was the most offensive overall, with Fox a close second, based on a three-year average. ABC easily led all networks in sexual content. NBC outdistanced the others in foul language. CBS was first in violence but still was the least offensive network overall.

"Plainly put, television is the raunchiest it has ever been in spite of, or perhaps because of, the unintended consequences of the ratings system and those who abuse it," PTC chairman Brent Bozell said in a news conference on Capitol Hill.

Training sessions focused on resources in three areas: discipleship, Sunday School, and children's ministry.

Conference participants included representatives from Puerto Rico, Argentina, Colombia, Chile, Guatemala, Venezuela, Mexico, Honduras, Spain, Peru, Venezuela, and Ecuador.

"We have so much demand for information about our resources, but there's no way we can reach church leaders in all these countries by ourselves," Lopez said, referring to LifeWay's 15-person international department staff. "But by bringing in these national leaders and training them, our hope is that they will become 'multipliers.' We believe they will become trainers themselves in their own countries."

Luis Aranguren, director of LifeWay's international department, said as many as a third of those trained at the conference will be used as consultants by LifeWay, leading resource and training conferences for the agency on an ongoing basis.

"This conference represents our first organized, intentional step toward making a real impact in Latin America," Aranguren said. "It shows we're serious about being an international organization."

Fanny Gutierrez, president of the Colombia Baptist Convention in Bogota, said many of the discipleship courses she heard about at the meeting address a real need in her country — leadership development.

"I really believe that leadership is connected to discipleship," Gutierrez said, adding the LifeWay discipleship course,

"Experiencing God," had been instrumental in her own growth as a Christian.

Fabian Ruiz, director of Christian education for the Baptist Convention of Argentina, also had praise for "Experiencing God."

He told of a woman in his church who became a Christian, but soon drifted from her faith in God. But after reading the trade book version of "Experiencing God," she told him: "I had not known God until now, but after reading this book, I've gotten to know him."

"The authors of books like these probably have no idea the impact they are making around the world," Ruiz said.

A key contribution of the LifeWay conference, Ruiz said, is that it equipped leaders to communicate to churches the value of the Christian materials and how they can be used to enhance ministry.

"I'm amazed at God's hand in all of this," he said of the meeting. "So much of what we've been hearing about is exactly what our country needs. It's not a human thing. It's definitely the Holy Spirit in action."

Gutierrez agreed, adding: "There's been a lot of value in what I've learned here. I can't wait to take this vision back to my country."

Ted Warren, executive vice president and chief operating officer for LifeWay, described the meeting as "historic," adding it reflects LifeWay's new vision of providing biblical solutions that spiritually transform individuals and cultures.

"There are a lot of people offering solutions to today's problems," he said, "but most are only temporary fixes. We're offering solutions from the Bible. Those are eternal."

that analyzes media content.

Steve Allen, a longtime TV personality, is the spokesman for a PTC campaign to urge advertisers to steer away from "TV filth, vulgarity, coarse humor, pre-marital sex situations, violence, killings, and all the rest into American living rooms and children's bedrooms."

Letters of support for the campaign can be mailed to Steve Allen, Parents Television Council, Dept. 6RAC24, 600 Wilshire Blvd., Suite 7000, Los Angeles, CA 90017.

"TV is leading children down a moral sewer," Allen said in a full-page ad in The New York Times May 23. Allen asked, "Are you as outraged as I am at how TV is undermining the morals of children ... encouraging them to have pre-marital sex ... encouraging lack of respect for authority ... and shaping our country down to the lowest standards of decency?"

A focus on TV advertisers can have results, Allen wrote, noting, "Recently viewers critical of just one TV program let the sponsors know of their anger, and over 35 sponsors cancelled their ads!"

Companies which advertise on TV typically have "fine people" at their helm, Allen wrote. "Many are parents and grandparents. The trouble is they have been letting their ad agencies and others decide which programs to sponsor and they are unaware of the harm they are doing."

## Bibliocipher

By Charles Marx  
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SBF OSS FYCDB FYOF  
DBBQ FYBB EBVCUXB  
OAJ TB WSOJ UA FYBB:  
OAJ SBF DGXY OD SCMB  
FYN DOSMOFUCA DON  
XCAFUAGOSSN, SBF WCJ  
TB KOWAUZUBJ.

HDSOK DBMBAFN: ZCGE

Clue: E = R

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: Ecclesiastes Five: Seven.

The solution is not to discontinue the ratings, because that would communicate Hollywood had surrendered on efforts to control the offensive content, Bozell said.

It is "time to challenge the industry, which spoke so loudly about responsibility during the ratings debate," he said. "Does it, or doesn't it, intend to voluntarily clean up its act?"

The television industry implemented an age-based ratings system in January 1997 but added content symbols in October under pressure from Congress. At the start of programs, the cable and broadcast networks, with the exception of NBC, use letters to denote content. The symbols are S for sexual depictions, V for violence, L for foul language, and D for suggestive dialogue. Additionally, the system uses TV-G, TV-PG, TV-14, and TV-M, much like the motion-picture industry uses G, PG, PG-13, and R in its ratings.

Last year, the PTC released a report showing the ratings system was failing to live up to its purpose. The study of programs during the family hour on prime time showed 65% of shows containing foul language failed to carry an L for language and 76% with sexual innuendo did not receive a D for dialogue.

Sen. Joseph Lieberman, D-Conn., criticized the TV industry for "growing ruder, cruder, and lewd," even after Congress adopted legislation requiring the

V-chip be installed in all new televisions. The V-chip will enable parents to block programs from viewing based on the ratings system. All television models 13 inches and larger have to include the v-chip by Jan. 1, 2000, according to rules approved by the Federal Communications Commission in 1998.

While Lieberman said no one wants to practice censorship, it may be time for the FCC to consider program content before granting licenses to broadcast stations.

Sen. Sam Brownback, R-Kan., said at the May 26 news conference a label should not be confused with a solution.

"There is a difference between taking out the trash and giving it a label," he said. "It may be worthwhile to stick labels on trash TV, but it would be even better to just take the trash out."

"The world of TV character is, thank goodness, far more violent, conflicted, and perverse than the life of most average Americans," Brownback said. "For example, there are far more Amish people in the United States than there are serial murderers. There are more pastors than there are prostitutes. But you'd never know that from watching TV."

Lieberman and Brownback serve on the PTC's advisory board. The PTC is the Hollywood project of the Media Research Center, a Northern Virginia-based organization